

REPORT ON NATIVE PAPERS

FOR THE

Week ending the 6th June 1896.

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ASSAM PAPERS.

Nil.

LIST OF NEWSPAPERS.

No.	Names of Newspapers.	Place of publication.	Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.	REMARKS.
BENGALI.					
<i>Weekly.</i>					
1	"Banganivasi" ...	Calcutta	5,000	30th May, 1896.	
2	"Bangavasi" ...	Ditto	20,000		
3	"Baniya Darpan" ...	Ditto	.....	2nd June, 1896.	
4	"Hitaishi" ...	Ditto	800		
5	"Hitavadi" ...	Ditto	About 4,000	29th May, 1896.	
6	"Kumari Patrika" ...	Ditto	.....	
7	"Mihir-o-Sudhakar" ...	Ditto	2,500	30th ditto.	
8	"Navayuga" ...	Ditto	.....	
9	"Sahachar" ...	Ditto	About 500	20th ditto.	
10	"Samay" ...	Ditto	3,000	29th ditto.	
11	"Sanjivani" ...	Ditto	3,000	30th ditto.	
12	"Som Prakash" ...	Ditto	800	25th May and 1st June 1896.	
<i>Daily.</i>					
1	"Banga Vidya Prakashika" ...	Ditto	About 350	1st to 4th June, 1896.	
2	"Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika." ...	Ditto	1,000		
3	"Samvad Prabhakar" ...	Ditto	1,250	28th May, 1st, 3rd and 4th June 1896.	
4	"Samvad Purnachandrodaya" ...	Ditto	200		
5	"Sulabh Dainik" ...	Ditto	Read by 3,000	28th to 30th May, and 1st to 4th June 1896.	
HINDI.					
<i>Weekly.</i>					
1	"Bharat Mitra" ...	Ditto	2,000	28th May, 1896.	
2	"Hindi Bangavasi" ...	Ditto	10,000	1st June, 1896.	
3	"Uchit Vakta" ...	Ditto	.....	
<i>Daily.</i>					
1	"Dainik Bharat Mitra" ...	Ditto	5,000		
PERSIAN.					
<i>Weekly.</i>					
1	"Hublul Mateen" ...	Ditto	.....	25th May, 1896.	
URDU.					
<i>Weekly.</i>					
1	"Darussaltanat and Urdu Guide." ...	Ditto	310	28th May, 1896.	
2	"General and Gauhariassi" ...	Ditto	330	31st ditto.	

No	Names of Newspapers.	Place of publication.	Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.	REMARKS.	
BENGALI.						
Fortnightly.						
1	"Bankura Darpan" ...	Bankura ...	450	1st June, 1896.	Only six copies have been issued since the paper was revived in January 1894. Some 200 copies of each issue are said to have been circulated, but no subscribers have been registered. This paper is said to have some circulation in the Division, but the number of subscribers could not be ascertained.	
2	"Ulubaria Darpan" ...	Ulubaria ...	700			
Weekly.						
1	"Burdwan Sanjivani" ...	Burdwan ...	About 250	26th May, 1896.		
2	"Chinsura Vartavaha" ...	Chinsura ...	550	31st ditto.		
3	"Darsak" ...	Ditto ...	.....		
4	"Education Gazette" ...	Hooghly ...	1,145	29th ditto.		
Monthly.						
1	"Ghosak" ...	Khulna ...	350			
BENGALI.						
Weekly.						
1	"Murshidabad Hitaishi" ...	Murshidabad ...	826	27th May, 1896.		
2	"Murshidabad Pratinidhi" ...	Berhampore ...	200			
3	"Pratihar" ...	Ditto ...	603	29th ditto.		
URIYA.						
Monthly.						
1	"Brahma" ...	Cuttack ...	160			
2	"Indradhanu" ...	Ditto ...	.....		
3	"Shikshabandhu" ...	Ditto ...	.....		
4	"Utkalprabha" ...	Mayurbhunj ...	.....		
Weekly.						
1	"Sambalpur Hitaishini" ...	Bamra in the Central Provinces.	.....	22nd and 29th April, 1896.	
2	"Samvad Vahika" ...	Balasore ...	190	23rd and 30th ditto.		
3	"Uriya and Navasamvad" ...	Ditto ...	309	22nd and 29th ditto.		
4	"Utkal Dipika" ...	Cuttack ...	480	25th April and 2nd May 1896.		
HINDI.						
Monthly.						
1	"Bihar Bandhu" ...	Bankipur ...	500			
Weekly.						
1	"Aryavarta" ...	Dinapur ...	1,000			
URDU.						
Weekly.						
1	"Akhbar-i-Al Punch" ...	Bankipur ...	500	23rd April, 1896.		
2	"Gaya Punch" ...	Gaya ...	400	26th May, 1896.		

No.	Names of Newspapers.	Place of publication.	Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.	REMARKS.
	BENGALI.				
	<i>Weekly.</i>	RAJSHAHI DIVISION.			
1	"Bagura Darpan" ...	Bogra ...	.....	27th May, 1896.	
2	"Hindu Ranjika" ...	Boalia, Rajshahi ...	195		
3	"Rangpur Dikprakash" ...	Kakina, Rangpur ...	180		
	HINDI.				
	<i>Monthly.</i>				
1	"Darjeeling Mission ke Masik Samachar Patrika."	Darjeeling ...	500		It is said that 550 copies of the paper are printed each month. Out of this number 150 copies are distributed among the subscribers, and the rest sold to the public at three pies per copy.
	BENGALI.				
	<i>Fortnightly.</i>	DACCA DIVISION.			
1	"Kasipur Nivasi" ...	Kasipur, Barisal ...	244	27th May, 1896.	
	<i>Weekly.</i>				
1	"Charu Mihir" ...	Mymensingh ...	900	25th May, 1896.	
2	"Dacca Prakash" ...	Dacca ...	2,400	31st ditto.	
3	"Saraswat Patra" ...	Do. ...	About 440	30th ditto.	
4	"Vikrampur" ...	Lauhajangha, Dacca ...	240	28th ditto.	
	ENGLISH AND BENGALI.				
	<i>Weekly.</i>				
1	"Dacca Gazette" ...	Dacca ...	500		
	BENGALI.				
	<i>Fortnightly.</i>	CHITTAGONG DIVISION.			
1	"Tripura Prakash" ...	Comilla ...	700		
	<i>Weekly.</i>				
1	"Sansodhini" ...	Chittagong ...	120		
	BENGALI.				
	<i>Fortnightly.</i>	ASSAM.			
1	"Paridarshak-o-Srihattavasi"	Sylhet ...	.....	

I.—FOREIGN POLITICS.

SAHACHAR,
May 27th, 1896.

It is expressly stated in the English statute for the better government of India, says the *Sahachar* of the 27th May, that India's money and troops can be used without Parliament's special sanction only in repelling enemies who attack Her Majesty's Indian or other possessions. But if the British Ministry want to employ India's troops and spend her money for any other purpose, then they should first obtain the sanction of Parliament. The Indian troops which have been sent to Suakim have not gone to defend any Indian or British possession. It is for the public to judge whether India is in any way concerned in the Soudan expedition. Under the circumstances, the authorities in England were bound to obtain the sanction of Parliament before sending Indian troops to the Soudan, especially as there was no necessity for such haste, it being impossible to begin fighting till the rains have ceased. It is true, the Government in England can urge precedents showing that Indian troops have been similarly employed before. But is it any reason that England should do India a fresh injustice, because she did her injustice in the past?

II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

(a)—Police.

CHARU MIHIR,
May 25th, 1896.

2. A correspondent of the *Charu Mihir* of the 25th May says that a theft, in which property worth about Rs. 475 was carried away, was committed on the 9th May last in the house of Sachni Sekh Poddar, an inhabitant of the village Paguli within the jurisdiction of the Fulpur police-station in the My-mensingh district. The head-constable in charge of the station being away, it will be some days before an investigation is held, and then it will be difficult to trace the offenders. For the last three years, theft and dacoity with murder have been very prevalent in these parts; but not in one of these cases have the culprits been brought to justice. Perfect anarchy seems to reign in the district.

3. Another correspondent of the same paper, writing from Nalitabari, in the same district, complains of the meddlesomeness of the police who interfere even in petty quarrels between husbands and wives, and make this an opportunity for extorting money. It is the chaukidars who serve as the informants; and in this way the thana officers dispose of a large number of cases every day. They are said to dispose of even money disputes relating to loans contracted on hand-notes.

CHARU MIHIR.

4. The *Kasipur Nivasi* of the 27th May complains that the fishermen of the Backergunge district are in the habit of spearing fish in private tanks with a weapon which is known as *konch*. Nobody ventures to oppose the fishermen who are armed with that weapon. Many wicked people come so armed for purposes other than spearing fish. Those who keep this weapon should be required to take out licenses for their weapon.

KASIPUR NIVASI,
May 27th, 1896.

5. The *Vikrampur* of the 28th May asks if the poor salaries which are received by head-constables and Sub-Inspectors will enable those two grades of officers in the Puri Police in Orissa to keep horses and English-made harness, as they have been required to do by their District Superintendent. Or does the District Superintendent of Puri reckon the bribes which are exacted by the police as part of their legitimate income? Is the order, again, one of his own passing, or has it been issued under instructions from superior authority?

VIKRAMPUR,
May 28th, 1896.

6. In reference to the Serampore *Bakr-id* affair, the *Darussaltanat and Urdu Guide*, of the 28th May, says that there is no doubt that Mr. Lister was overawed by the Hindus of Serampore, as otherwise he would not have passed his order prohibiting the Musalmans of Rishra from saying their *Id* prayer and sacrificing cows in a place which was shut out from public view, and which was situated in a *busti* mostly inhabited by Muhammadans. It is to be wondered why the Hindus of Serampore complained against the

DARUSSALTANAT
AND URDU GUIDE,
May 28th, 1896.

Prevalence of crime in the My-mensingh district.

Meddlesomeness of the My-mensingh police.

Spearing of fish with *konch* in the Backergunge district.

An order of the District Superintendent of Police, Puri.

Mr. Lister's interference with the *Bakr-id* festival in Serampore.

observance of the ceremony, as it is well known that the Bengalis themselves are accustomed to beef-eating. Whenever a Bengali-Hindu becomes the guest of a Musalman, he importunes his host to supply him with roasted beef. Can Mr. Lister say under what authority he prevented the Musalmans of Rishra from celebrating their *Bakr-id* festival simply on the ground that in a previous year the ceremony of cow-slaughter had not been performed in Rishra?

Mr. Lister's interference with the observance of the *Bakr-id* festival is an open violation of the Queen's Proclamation.

HITAVADI,
May 29th, 1896.

Police oppression at Sonabari in the Nadia district.

7. The *Hitavadi* of the 29th May has heard from a correspondent of the perpetration of terrible oppression by the police at Sonabari, a village in the Nadia district. The Sub-Inspector of the Meherpur thana grievously tortured an accused person with a view to extort confession from him. The cries of the poor man having drawn the villagers to the spot, the Sub-Inspector released him. It is also said that the police violated the sister of the woman, who complained against the man who was so tortured. The writer cannot believe all this on the bare assertion of the correspondent. But the police is so oppressive in this country, that the charges do not seem altogether improbable. It is hoped that the authorities will enquire into the matter, and, if the charges be found true, will condignly punish the offenders.

HITAVADI

The frontier police force at Dibrugarh.

8. The same paper says that the Frontier Police at Dibrugarh are committing great oppression. Three constables belonging to that force, namely, Biyai, Rupai and Mohan, attempted to violate a Cachari woman, who was saved from outrage only by the timely arrival of a town constable. All three have been accused. Another constable of the Frontier Police force purchased some articles from a boy in the Diglibazar. The rupee which he paid for the articles happened to fall on the ground, whereupon the policeman put his foot on it so as to conceal it. The boy pressing for payment was beaten by the constable. The other shopkeepers then assembled and gave the policeman a good thrashing. In the evening, however, 50 or 60 constables came to the bazar and looted it, and took to their heels when the town police came. Great uneasiness prevails at Dibrugarh on account of the oppressions committed by these men.

BANGAVASI,
May 30th, 1896.

The Meherpur police.

9. The *Bangavasi* of the 30th May draws the attention of the authorities to a case of police oppression in the Meherpur subdivision of the Nadia district. A police Sub-Inspector took an accused person to the farm of a local *panchayet* and tortured him with the view of extorting a confession. The cries of the oppressed person drew a crowd who rescued him. It is further alleged that the Sub-Inspector extorted three rupees from the complainant, a woman, and violated the chastity of her sister. The authorities should institute an inquiry into this case of police oppression, as given in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

GENERAL AND
GAUHARI ASFI,
May 31st, 1896.

The *Bakr-id* affair in Serampore.

10. In reference to the Serampore cow-killing case, the *General and Gauhari Asfi* of the 31st May observes that Mr. Lister could, without wounding the religious feelings of the Hindus, help the Musalmans of Rishra in observing the *Bakr-id* by killing cows in the *busti* where they intended to do so, because it is occupied mostly by Musalmans. In such a place the Musalmans have every right to perform the *korban* by slaughtering cows.

HITAISHI,
June 2nd, 1896.

Cooly recruiters in Calcutta.

11. The *Hitaishi* of the 2nd June asks the Calcutta Police to keep an eye on certain cooly recruiters who, dressed like religious men, wait at the Armenian Ghat in expectation of the arrival of the Midnapore steamer. When that steamer arrives at six o'clock in the morning and at half-past four in the evening, these hypocrites try to dupe those passengers who are strangers to Calcutta, and to decoy them into cooly depôts. The other day they tried to practise their art upon some people who accompanied a friend of the writer's from Midnapore.

The police should not also give up the enquiry in the case in which a seemingly respectable resident of Panchu Dutt's Lane in Garanhatta is suspected to have sent up a neighbour's daughter, aged nine or ten, as a cooly to a tea-garden.

12. The same paper writes as follows:—

Gunda oppression in Calcutta. We noticed in our last issue (Report on Native Papers for 30th May, paragraph 11) the oppressions which are committed by *gundas* in Masjidbari Street in Calcutta. The Police Commissioner seems to have taken no steps to check these oppressions, for they seem to be on the increase. On the 29th May last, at about 12-30 P.M., some twenty-five or thirty *gundas* entered the houses of a number of prostitutes in that quarter, and commenced beating the women. On their crying out, the ruffians used *lathis*, and ultimately fled with some money. The police, however, gave no sign of their existence all this time. Warrants have been issued against seven of these *badmashes*. Though they are freely going about committing oppressions, the police do not care to arrest them. The other day two *gundas* entered the house of a prostitute at noon when everybody was sleeping. The men stole a box containing jewellery, and were escaping when another woman saw them and raised a hue-and-cry. Though the police were nowhere to be found, the men were pursued, and one of them, who was caught by his cloth by a boy, stabbed the latter. Another passer-by, however, apprehended him, and made him over to the police.

What are matters coming to in Calcutta? The citizens are constantly oppressed by *badmashes*, yet the police is perfectly indifferent. Is this the country of the Maghs, or is it the rule of Seraj-ud-dowla? Why, during day time, are constables never found in the lanes and bye-streets? Besides these oppressions, petty thefts are very common in the town.

13. In the opinion of the *Sulabh Dainik* of the 4th June, the Musal-
The prevented cow killing riot at Rishra. mans are wrong in finding fault with Mr. Lister, Subdivisional Officer of Serampore, for the prohibition of cow-slaughter in that place. As far as the writer has been able to ascertain, the Subdivisional Officer did nothing that was against the law. He should be thanked, and not blamed, for taking speedy and effective measures in preventing an impending disturbance which might assume serious proportions.

(b)—Working of the Courts.

14. Referring to the reduction by the District Judge of Mymensingh by six months of the sentence of one year's imprisonment passed upon each of the two accused, named Kancherbap and Miachand, for having taken away by force a woman, named Aimunnesa, from her husband's custody and violated her, the *Charu Mihir* of the 25th May observes that the *badmashes* who commit such outrages ought to be most severely dealt with.

15. A correspondent of the same paper makes the following reply to the arguments which were urged some time ago by another correspondent against the proposal to create an Independent Bench at Dewanganj in the Mymensingh district (Report on Native Papers for 7th March, paragraph 8):—

(1) The objection that the establishment of a Criminal Court in the village will stimulate people's desire for litigation possesses no force, for it is the rich and the strong who generally, in order to persecute and harass the poor and the weak, institute false cases, and distant Criminal Courts are not a hindrance to them. A Bench at Dewanganj is, on the other hand, calculated to serve as a check upon the oppressions of the strong.

(2) Plenty of respectable and competent men are available to constitute a Bench at Dewanganj. A resident of the village has been serving as a Magistrate on the Jamalpur Bench; and some among those whom the Subdivisional Officer of Jamalpur selected have agreed to serve on the Dewanganj Bench.

(3) That a Bench is really wanted at Dewanganj is proved by the fact that a petition was submitted to the Commissioner of the Division, signed by more than two hundred villagers, not one of whom is a candidate for a Magistrateship. The fact of importance in this connection is not that a Bench is wanted by a handful of persons seeking place and honours, but that the creation of a Bench is opposed by a special class of persons, namely, the mukhtars who practise at Jamalpur, and whose interests will be seriously affected by the transfer of a large amount of criminal work from Jamalpur to Dewanganj.

HITAJIBI,
June 2nd, 1896.

SULABH DAINIK,
June 4th, 1896.

CHARU MIHIR,
May 25th, 1896.

CHARU MIHIR.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI,
May 26th, 1896.

16. The *Burdwan Sanjivani* of the 26th May does not approve of the transfer of the Additional Subordinate Judge of Burdwan to Midnapore. Babu Rajendra Kumar Basu disposed of a large number of old appeal cases in the course of the last few months. The heavy file of original cases, however, remains still undisposed of. There are about thirty-four such cases which were filed more than a year ago. To dispose of this heavy original file would require the whole time and attention of an Additional Subordinate Judge for a year. If this state of things had been known to Government, it would not certainly have transferred the Additional Subordinate Judge of Burdwan.

HITAVADI,
May 29th, 1896.

17. The *Hitavadi* of the 29th May writes as follows:—

Maulvi Fazlal Karim.

We have already said that Maulvi Fazlal Karim was in the habit of making prisoners do his private work. Now that fuller disclosures have been made on the subject in the course of the trial of the head warder of the Madaripur Jail, we request Government to depute the able Inspector-General of Jails to examine the registers and accounts of that jail. The Maulvi has charged Government for work which he got done by prisoners. Now, a daily fee of two annas is charged for every prisoner employed on private work outside a jail. The account books of the jail should be inspected, with a view to ascertain whether any such payment is recorded therein for private work got done by the Maulvi.

On the 15th January last, in compliance with the instructions received from the Maulvi, the head warder of the Jail sent seven prisoners under the escort of a warder, named Jang Bahadur, and the Maulvi's peon, Abdul Ajij. They were employed in various works by the Maulvi under the custody of the warder and the peon. But while so employed, Akajaddi, a prisoner under a sentence of imprisonment for six months, made his escape from the custody of the peon. We have said before that Akajaddi fled because on some previous occasion he had been ill-treated by the Maulvi while employed in his private work.

When the head warder objected to allow prisoners under sentences of imprisonment for more than 14 days to do work outside the jail, the Maulvi said that he had procured an order from the Inspector-General of Jails for the employment of such prisoners outside the Jail, and that the order had been recorded in the order-book. It is not known under what law the Maulvi made the prisoners chop wood in his house, wash the clothes of the *bandis* he keeps and remove the droppings of his poultry and even the evacuations of his babies. The Maulvi reported to the Inspector-General of Jails that he had employed the prisoners to do private work in his house, lest they should get lazy; for there was not work enough for them to do within the jail. It has been proved by evidence that this plea was false. In the jail the prisoners are employed in various works, such as oil-pressing, wheat-grinding, jute-spinning, *surki*-making, &c., and there is always work enough there for from 25 to 30 prisoners.

There is much to be said on the subject, and there is much also for Government to enquire into. If the officials do not make a proper enquiry into the matter, we will try to have an enquiry instituted by higher authorities. We will also show afterwards how the Maulvi has procured his *bandis*.

BANGAVASI,
May 30th, 1896.

18. The *Bangavasi* of the 30th May understands that the Magistrate of

The Magistrate of Muzaffarpur.

Muzaffarpur has issued an order to the effect that all complaints in which Europeans or factory people are implicated should be sent up to him for final orders. The Magistrate's motive in passing this order is not known, but people ascribe it to want of impartiality. An officer in whose impartiality people of all classes ought to place implicit and unbounded confidence ought to act with greater care and circumspection.

SANJIVANI,
May 30th, 1896.

19. The *Sanjivani* of the 30th May thanks the Marine Magistrate of

The Marine Magistrate of Chittagong.

Chittagong for convicting and punishing the Europeans charged with assault on a native shopkeeper. It is very rare in these days to see a European Magistrate do justice in a case in which a European is a party. If all Magistrates were like this Magistrate of Chittagong, Europeans would not dare to insult or ill-treat the natives.

(d)—Education.

20. The *Pratihar* of the 29th May says that the promoters of the Muhammadan female education movement in Calcutta are trying to secure the sympathy and support of Her Highness Shumsh-i-Jahan Begum of Murshidabad. Considering the effect which female education has produced among the Hindu community, few will feel disposed to encourage female education among Muhammadans. True education may make goddesses of women; but where is such education to be had? Schools like the one proposed are only instruments for the demoralisation of society.

PRATIKAR,
May 29th, 1896.

21. The *Sanjivani* of the 30th May has the following:—
Sometime ago Babu Rabindranath Tagore, in an article in the *Sadhana*, advocated the introduction of Bengali in the curriculum of the Calcutta University. This gave rise to some correspondence between Babu Rabindra Nath and some distinguished members of the Senate of the Calcutta University. One of them, the late Babu Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, wrote in his trenchant style that he tried on many occasions to broach the subject to many distinguished Senators, and even raised the question at a meeting of the Senate, but his voice was not heard. Dr. Guru Das Bannerji wrote that at his request some of the members of the Senate moved a resolution at a meeting of that body in favour of the introduction of Bengali in the curriculum of the University, but the motion was negatived by an overwhelming majority. Babu Ananda Mohun Bose wrote that whenever he made any proposal in favour of the introduction of Bengali in the curriculum of study, it was from his own countrymen that he met with the strongest opposition. These countrymen of Mr. Bose have proved to Bengali literature worse tyrants than the University *chaprasis* did to Mr. Sudhansu Mohan Bose. They ought to be more severely punished than the *chaprasis* for the cruelty with which they have so long treated their mother tongue. Nothing but severe penance can atone for their sin.

SANJIVANI,
May 30th, 1896.

A resolution was lately passed at a meeting of the Faculty of Arts, proposing the introduction of Bengali composition in the curriculum of study for the F. A. and B. A. Examinations. A Committee has been appointed to consider and report on the whole question. We do not know whether this Committee is collecting materials for or against the resolution, but this is certain that when its report will be submitted to the Senate for consideration, there will be a fight over the matter, and many will take their stand against the passing of the Resolution. But if the cause of Bengali literature be lost in the Senate, it will be to the eternal shame of its Bengali members. The time has come when Bengali literature should be given a recognised place in the curriculum of the Calcutta University. Its claims should no longer be ignored. National progress moves hand in hand with the progress of national literature. If we do not try to develop our national energies, mere speech-making and half-hearted writing in the press will not bring about the formation of our national character. It will be dealing a death blow at our national life if the resolution above referred to be rejected. We earnestly hope that the members of the Senate will this time in one voice advocate the cause of Bengali literature, and the souls of the departed Madhusudan, Bankim, Dinabandhu and Akshay Kumar will shower blessings upon them from heaven. The feeling that we have honoured our mother tongue is in itself more ennobling than any number of gold medals set with gems and tons of parchment in the shape of University certificates.

(e)—Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.

22. The *Som Prakash* of the 25th May says that unless the existing well-privies in private houses in the Santipur Municipality, in the Nadia district, which were constructed some forty or fifty years ago, and in which night-soil has been ever since accumulating, are replaced by service privies, it will not be long before the health of Santipur will completely break down. The writer has been for the last five or six years trying to draw attention to this subject, but without effect. The question was raised at the meeting of the

SOM PRAKASH,
May 25th, 1896.

municipality held on the 18th May last, but it fell through on account of the opposition of certain Commissioners who pride themselves on their so-called patriotism.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI,
May 26th, 1896.

23. The *Burdwan Sanjivani* of the 26th May says that there is scarcity of water in Kandarsona, Gopkale, Jyotram and Nandun, villages at a distance of not more than four miles from Burdwan town. The District Board should dig a well in a central place, so that it may be within the reach of all these villages. The Grand Trunk Road passes through these villages. There being no tank or well on the road-side, passers-by often beg for water in these villages, but in vain. The villagers themselves have no water to drink. How can they give it to others?

BURDWAN SANJIVANI.

24. The same paper contradicts the statement made in the official report on water-supply in Kalna that there is only one village in that subdivision, the inhabitants of which have to fetch water from a distance of a mile. The Subdivisional Officer must have been misled by a police report in making the above statement. It is a fact that Alagarh, Naronda, Tehata, Baitiparah, Srirampur, Jangalparah, Sikarpara, Pakhagachi, Bigara and many other villages depend for water on a tank about two miles off. These and many other villages are suffering from acute water-scarcity.

MURSHIDABAD
HITAISHI,
May 27th, 1896.

25. The *Murshidabad Hitaishi* of the 27th May had hoped to see a non official Vice-Chairman appointed to the newly constituted District Board in Murshidabad, but has been disappointed. The amount which has been allotted to the Local Boards at the new District Board's meeting is quite inadequate, and the elected members have not been adequately represented on the Education and Finance Committees. The writer cannot also approve of the action of the Board in setting apart, at the request of the Director of Public Instruction, two lower primary scholarships for Muhammadan boys. All scholarships should be competed for. Is there any provision in the law for awarding special scholarships to Musalmans?

SAHACHAR,
May 27th, 1896.

26. The *Sahachar* of the 27th May writes as follows:—
Sir Alexander Mackenzie in the water-scarcity. Sir Alexander Mackenzie has come to see that a large number of deaths take place in this province every year from water-scarcity. We repeatedly drew Sir Charles Elliott's attention to the fact that the drinking of filthy and impure water was the cause of cholera and malarial fever, and showed him that the view that both cholera and malarial poisons dwell in impure water was not an *ipse dixit* of ours, but was a conclusion arrived at by eminent medical men. But the overwise Sir Charles attached no importance to our statement on this subject, and was of opinion that the health of the province could be improved only by improving its drainage. This led him to pass a new Drainage Act and impose a tax upon zamindars and raiyats, leaving untouched the Railway Administrations which have been the chief offenders in the matter of obstructed drainage. Fortunately, the reins of the Bengal Administration have been taken up after Sir Charles Elliott by a man who is not only thoroughly acquainted with the province, but is its fast friend and real well-wisher. During the last two years of Sir Charles Elliott's administration, the rainfall in Bengal was very scanty, and the Native Press predicted, before the setting in of the last cold season, that a water famine was imminent. The prediction put the new Lieutenant-Governor on his guard, and he organised measures in right earnest for averting the impending distress. But it is no easy thing to make within a few months all over a large province like Bengal wells and tanks sufficient to avert a severe water-scarcity. So the scarcity broke out, in spite of what the Lieutenant-Governor could do to check its progress, and the result was a heavy mortality in the country. Sir Alexander Mackenzie, however, was not in the least to blame for this. His earnest attempts to ward off the calamity drew, and still draw, from us unqualified praise. The distress of the present year has been sufficiently relieved; but the highest commendation is due to the Lieutenant-Governor for the steps he is taking to prevent a similar water-scarcity in the future. The province cannot, indeed, be too grateful to His Honour for the instructions

he has issued in his two circulars to the District Boards and Magistrates and Commissioners. We sincerely pray to God to give the Lieutenant-Governor health, in order to enable him to accomplish the task of beneficence he has imposed upon himself. If salutary measures like those which have been adopted by Sir Alexander Mackenzie had been inaugurated from 1893, thousands of lives would have been saved from untimely death. Now that it has been sufficiently proved that bad water is the cause of malaria and cholera, Sir Alexander's beneficent measures may also be expected to root out those two terrible diseases. If his attempts succeed, he will be enshrined in the hearts of the people of Bengal as a god.

KASIPUR NIVASI,
May 27th, 1896.

Water-scarcity in the Backergunge district.

27. The *Kasipur Nivasi* of the 27th May is glad that the Lieutenant-Governor has ordered the District Boards to excavate tanks in places which are suffering from water-scarcity. Sarsi, Magarpara, Kasipur, Kasagura, Ujirpur, Raivadradi, Pamar, Rayapur, and other villages in Backergunge are suffering from water-scarcity, and it is hoped that Government will promptly remove that scarcity.

PRATIKAR,
May 29th, 1896.

A charge against a Municipal Commissioner of Berhampore in the Murshidabad district.

28. One Afzal Hossein, a rate-payer in the Berhampore Municipality, complains in the *Pratihar* of the 29th May that though he and his brothers live as one joint family, separate chaukidari and latrine taxes have been assessed upon him and one of his brothers. Apart from their injustice, the assessments are higher than the assessments which have been made of several other persons who have incomes equal to, if not greater than, the income of the correspondent and his brother. The Commissioner of the correspondent's ward makes no secret of the circumstance that it was he who assessed heavier taxes upon all who voted for his rival at the last election, and tauntingly tells aggrieved parties to go to the defeated candidate for redress. A house belonging to the correspondent's brother-in-law, but which has been vacant for the last three years, has been assessed, and the correspondent has been made liable for its taxes.

PRATIKAR.

The Murshidabad District Board's allotment to Local Boards.

29. The same paper is surprised to find that the District Board of Murshidabad has allotted only Rs. 5,000 out of a road cess income of Rs. 89,185 for distribution among all the Local Boards in the district. Only two years ago, when the Lalbagh Board had not yet been amalgamated with the Sadar Board, the latter alone received four thousand rupees. But hence forward the amalgamated Boards, with twelve thanas under them, will receive only Rs. 2,300 for road repair. This will give every village only a few pieces of copper. The amount will be hardly enough to keep in repair even the important Local Board roads, numbering about 400, which the officials have frequent occasion to use. What will be left, after this work, for village roads may well be guessed.

30. The *Hitavadi* of the 29th May writes as follows:—

Taxation for water-supply.

HITAVADI,
May 29th, 1896.

The average monthly income of an Indian is two rupees, out of which he has to pay ten pice as tax. In no other civilised country in the world have people to support life on so poor an income or to bear so heavy a burden of taxation. The very name of a new tax therefore curdles our blood. Sir Alexander Mackenzie is about to impose fresh burdens upon us, although he knows that we are unable to bear any new impost. If water-scarcity is to be removed by fresh taxation, Government had better give up its benevolent intentions. We will remove our water-scarcity, improve our village sanitation as best we can, and we do not require Government's charitable interference.

The circular which Mr. Secretary Risley sent to all District Magistrates on the 22nd May last, from his pleasant hill retreat, will freeze many people's blood. One portion of it runs as follows:—

"The Lieutenant-Governor is so impressed with the necessity of substantially increasing the resources of the District Boards and Union Committees in Bengal, and thus enabling them to promote village sanitation and water-supply, that he considers it essential that the present opportunity of introducing a comprehensive measure of permissive local taxation should not be allowed to pass without pressing the question to a decisive issue."

The tax is indeed proposed to be imposed for the good of the people; but is there none to see that the people are incapable of bearing a new burden?

Now that an amendment of the Local Self-Government Act is before the Bengal Legislative Council, it is proposed to insert in it provisions authorising the Local Boards and Union Committees to impose new taxes. It need hardly be said that though the control of these Boards and Committees is nominally vested in the people, they are in reality managed by the officials. Every shrewd man must, therefore, see that a provision for heavy taxation is about to be made on the plea of a reform of Local Self-Government.

How kind is the Lieutenant-Governor! People asked for water, and he is giving them fresh taxes. He has indeed assured them that the proceeds of this taxation will not be appropriated to any other purpose, and our fault will be impardonable if we say that we are not reassured by this. But a precisely similar assurance was given at the time of the imposition of the road cess by the Lieutenant-Governor of the time. That the Bengal Government forgot that pledge was owing entirely to our ill-luck. But because Government broke its promise on another occasion, we should not torture ourselves now with uncomfortable doubts and misgivings.

Government wants to put its foot on our necks, and without starting or feeling startled, we must submit our necks to be so dealt with. When Sir Alexander Mackenzie, incarnation of kindness as he is, has resolved to do this, we must *nolens volens* pay a new tax. We die if we pay a tax; we also die without better sanitation and water-supply. As death is inevitable either way, better pay the tax and die. Such is the situation which the kind-hearted Sir Alexander Mackenzie has invented for our good.

How the taxes are to be raised has not yet been settled. The kind-hearted Lieutenant-Governor has suggested three forms of taxation, and his clever officials will undoubtedly be able to hit upon many more. The Lieutenant-Governor's favourite scheme is as follows:—

(1) A tax upon musical processions. If people can find money to go in procession with light and music, they ought to be able to pay *chanda* (voluntary contribution) for the public good in connection therewith. A *chanda* is a voluntary payment, but there is certainly not much difference between a *chanda* voluntarily given and a *chanda* given on compulsion!

(2) A tax upon marriage. It does not stand to reason that people should enter into the blissful state of matrimony under British rule and pay no tax for so doing. The Lieutenant-Governor expects a very large income from this source. The money which will be raised in this way will remove scarcity of water and improve sanitation. *Ergo*, it must be an excellent proposal. Nor is this all. As the tax will be proportioned to the splendour of a marriage celebration, His Honour expects that his new impost will teach people to be thrifty.

His Honour has also talked of the Hindu ceremonies of *annaprasana* and investiture with the sacred thread. He probably forgot to talk of the *sradh* ceremony. His Honour has not also for the present talked of the well-known Musalman ceremony. But the settlement of such matters rests with the officers. His Honour has not also indicated how taxes are to be levied upon those who manage to taste the pleasures of married life without entering into wedlock. Nor has His Honour said anything about the initiation of those who keep beards and use spectacles.

(3) A wheel tax. It is by the wheels of carts and carriages that roads are most damaged. Let a tax, therefore, be levied upon those who drive carts and ride in carriages.

We are encouraged by the very great kindness shown by the Lieutenant-Governor to suggest some other taxes, and hope that His Honour, who has suggested the above three taxes, will not altogether disapprove of those which we suggest.

(1) A cooly tax. The coolies who are sent to Assam obtain employment and are in a fair way of being happy. Let them then pay a tax out of the advances they receive. The larger the number of such coolies, the larger will be the proceeds of this tax.

(2) A tax upon accidental deaths. Let a tax be levied upon every man who meets his death from an English kick or an English shot, the tax being

paid by him who claims the dead body. The man who meets his death in this way is rid once for all of taxes, as well as of all other evils that flesh is heir to, and it is but just that he should pay something at his exit from the world.

(3) A tax upon children. According to Malthus there should be a check upon population, but population cannot be checked without levying a tax on those who help to increase it. Two birds will thus be killed with one stone: the tax will be beneficial both socially and politically.

31. The water-scarcity agitation, observes the *Bangavasi* of the 30th May, has borne strange fruit. The Lieutenant-Governor proposes the imposition of several new taxes in villages for the purpose of removing water-scarcity. The sequel of the water-scarcity agitation. The proposal has taken the writer by surprise.

BANGAVASI,
May 30th, 1896.

32. The same paper understands that the Deputy Commissioner of the Sonthal Parganas has written to all the local zamindars, asking them to inform him whether there is any scarcity of water in their zamindaris and, if there is, whether they are taking any steps to remove it by digging wells and re-excavating silted-up tanks. And thus pressed, the zamindars have flatly denied the existence of water-scarcity. They have thus made it very easy for the Deputy Commissioner to write a report on the condition of water-supply in his district.

BANGAVASI.

33. Correspondents of the same paper complain of water scarcity in the mufassal. Scarcity is great in Patuli in the Hooghly district. The same is the case in Duarnahi, a village in the Burdwan district. There are some inches of muddy water only in one tank, and the villagers have to walk three miles to the Damodar for water. Scarcity is keenly felt in Beldanga, in the Murshidabad district, and people have to fetch water from the Bhagirathi, three miles off. There is great want of water in Meherpur in the Nadia district. Almost the whole subdivision has to depend on the Bhairabi. Water scarcity is being felt from Magh (January-February) last in Champrai, in the Hooghly district. The whole village depends upon the water of a tank more than a mile from the place. The water of this tank has become almost exhausted. The suffering of the people can be allayed to some extent if Maharaja Jatindra Mohan Tagore re-excavates the tank called Haldere in Gayo, a village in his zamindari.

BANGAVASI.

34. In continuation of its article on the 24-Parganas District Board Office, published in a previous issue (see Report on Native papers for 23rd May 1896, paragraph 31), the *Sanjivani* of the 30th May has the following:—

SANJIVANI,
May 30th, 1896.

Mr. Mehta, a member of the 24-Parganas District Board, lately called for the papers regarding the cases of Basanta Kumar Basu, education clerk, and Sarat Chandra Basu, Inspecting Pandit, who were reported against some time ago by Babu Krishna Chandra Banerjee, Sub-Inspector of Schools, in the service of the District Board. Mr. Collin referred him to the Vice-Chairman, and said that he might put a question regarding the matter at a meeting of the Board. We hope Mr. Mehta will not fail to press the matter home, and it will not take him long to discover the incapacity of the Vice-Chairman and the irregularities and misconduct of his subordinates. It is strange that while petty matters like the granting of a few days' leave to a teacher and the granting of a small aid to a pathsala are brought to the notice of the members, a matter so serious as the misconduct of the Board's employes has not been brought to their notice even in the course of the last two years. We feel ashamed to call this Local Self-Government. Let not the members of the Board remain indifferent any longer. Let them put down these irregularities with a high hand. They will find out that all these jobberies and irregularities are due to the worthlessness of the Vice-Chairman. It is extremely strange that whatever has passed for his opinion in Basanta Babu's case has been in the latter's hand-writing. Is anything more wanted to prove the incapacity of the Vice-Chairman?

We come to learn that Mr. Collin has let off the Head Clerk, has fined the Education Clerk his pay for the period for which he was suspended, and has invited the Vice-Chairman's opinion on the case of the Inspecting Pandit.

Mr. Collin's predecessor ordered that both the Education Clerk and the Inspecting Pandit were to be dismissed, if the Deputy Inspector appointed to enquire into their conduct reported against them. He also ordered that the Head Clerk should be severely punished if his guilt was proved. Mr. Collin, with his characteristic generosity, has, however, let off the Head Clerk. But is it not strange that the Chairman should ask the Vice-Chairman to pass his opinion on the Inspecting Pandit's case, for whom he has already in a manner interceded?

CHINSURA VARTAVAHA,
May 31st, 1896

35. The *Chinsura Vartavaha* of the 31st May says that the recent rains have cooled down the atmosphere, but have not filled the dried up tanks. Water-scarcity still prevails in the interior of the town. Kharua Bazar, in the heart of the town, is frequented by a large number of people, and they have to suffer a good deal from water-scarcity. The local Municipality is very busy in raising the latrine tax, but is quite indifferent to the suffering of the people from water-scarcity. The Municipality should at least dig a well in front of the police-station without further delay. Such a well is urgently needed.

BANKURA DARPAN,
June 1st, 1896.

36. The *Bankura Darpan* of the 1st June cannot approve of the proposal of the Bankura District Board to excavate only wells for water-supply. Tanks will be more useful than wells, because female members of native households prefer drawing water from tanks to drawing it from wells, which involves greater labour. Besides, tanks will supply drinking water to beasts and birds, which wells will not. Water-scarcity will not, indeed, be removed till a sufficient number of tanks have been excavated in the district. Where private owners do not re-excavate their old tanks, the District Board may have such tanks re-excavated at its expense.

There is not a single public tank within the Bankura Municipality for water-supply to the rate-payers. All that the Commissioners have done this year under Government's pressure is to dig three wells in three places. But this will not do. The Municipality must have a large and deep tank excavated in the heart of the town on its own account. It may form a park, and place the tank in its middle. This will give fresh air as well as good water to the rate-payers. If funds are not available for the execution of a plan like this, money should be raised by loan. At present the rate-payers have to dig out their drinking-water from the sandy beds of two rivers flowing at some distance from the town, and which contain no water during eight months in the year. The few private tanks in the town are not in a condition to allow of their water being used for drinking purposes during outbreaks of cholera or small-pox.

HITAISHI,
June 2nd, 1896.

37. The *Hitaishi* of the 2nd June is glad that within so short a time Sir Alexander Mackenzie has to a great extent succeeded in removing the prevailing water-scarcity.

But the question now is, how can a permanent water-supply be secured? The Lieutenant-Governor would have every District Board spend four to five thousand rupees every year on water-supply. But what guarantee is there that Sir Alexander Mackenzie's successor will stick to this practice, or that the District Boards will not, in the midst of their multifarious duties, try to evade their responsibility in this matter? The best plan that suggests itself to the writer is to set apart the income from pounds and ferries for the purpose of water-supply. The proceeds of the road cess ought to be enough for the making and repairing of roads, bridges, &c., and the Local Boards and Union Committees should get their allotments from this fund. The municipalities should be allowed to appropriate pound receipts only if they make provision for water-supply. It is hoped the Lieutenant-Governor will consider this suggestion.

HITAISHI.

38. The same paper has the following:—

Cause of Bengal's insanitary condition.

The rivers of Lower Bengal began to silt up almost simultaneously with the establishment of British rule in these provinces. It was in the time of Warren Hastings that the mouth of the Mathabhanga was almost completely silted up. And that gradually led to the silting up of the Bhairab, the Kapotaksha, the Kumar, the Ichhamati, the Churni and a number of other streams which, issuing from the Mathabhanga, watered these plains. The

process commenced towards the close of the eighteenth century, and within thirty or thirty-five years after its commencement Lower Bengal lost its old health. Notwithstanding what the late Raja Degumber Mitter and eminent scientists said, the writer firmly believes that the epidemic of malarial fever which broke out in 1831 and almost depopulated Lower Bengal had its origin in this cause.

It cannot be said that Government did nothing to prevent the evil. It spent sufficient money to keep the mouth of the Mathabhanga open. But the means it adopted did more harm than good. For its own commercial purposes it did its best to keep the mouth of the Mathabhanga open and prevent this particular river from completely silting up, by stopping up the mouths of some other rivers, and checking the current in others. Thus the short-sightedness of Government's officers ruined the people of Bengal. A perusal of Dr. Hunter's Statistical Account of the Nadia district will convince everybody of the true cause of the silting up of the Nadia and Jessore rivers.

Almost a century later, Government was roused to its senses. It was Sir Charles Elliott who saw that nothing could save Lower Bengal except a re-excavation of its rivers. He therefore hurried on with his drainage law, and pretended that the new law would remove all the miseries of the people. But in thus going to rectify the mischief which had been done by Government's own short-sightedness, His Honour imposed a fresh tax on the people. What the Musalman rulers did by sheer force the civilised Christian ruler attempted to do under the mask of law.

If Government be now really anxious to save the province, it ought to re-excavate the Bengal rivers at its own expense. That will be some expiation of its past sin, some atonement for the mischief it has done to the people. It spent ninety lakhs in purchasing the Orissa canals simply to save a private firm from loss. And can it not spend some ten lakhs to save the lives of its subjects? It should at least lend a few lakhs to the District Boards to enable them to execute the work, and take back its money in small instalments.

39. The *Sulabh Dainik* of the 2nd June objects to the proposed measures of taxation for the improvement of village water-supply. The proposal of taxation has thrown the people into a panic. The Indian people are almost ground down by taxation. The average monthly income of the Indian people is less than two rupees, out of which they have on the average to pay two annas and a half in the shape of taxes. It is not wise to increase this burden, already too heavy to bear.

SULABH DAINIK,
June 2nd, 1896.

40. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika* of the 2nd June has the following:—

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
June 2nd, 1896.

The water-supply Resolution.

We fully concur with the Lieutenant-Governor in the opinion that "there can be little doubt that much of the cholera, dysentery and malarial fever that prevails is traceable more or less directly to the use of bad water." Sir Alexander Mackenzie is of opinion that improved water-supply is calculated to improve the sanitary condition of the country more than improved drainage. True to his opinion, the Lieutenant-Governor is trying his best to bring about an improvement of water-supply in the Bengal villages. In a Resolution published in a recent issue of the *Calcutta Gazette*, His Honour has formulated a scheme for the improvement of water-supply. The most important question in this connection is the question of ways and means, and a large portion of the Resolution is, therefore, devoted to a discussion of this question.

(1) Of the existing sources of revenue which are available for the purpose of improving the water-supply, the first is private liberality. The Lieutenant-Governor justly complains that the modern Hindu does not properly obey the injunction of his *Sastra*, according to which the digging of wells and tanks is a matter of religious obligation. Unhappily, "the religious sentiment which inspired these works is believed to be weaker than it was." "More ostentatious forms of benevolence have come into fashion, which compete seriously with local works of charity." It is quite clear from the Resolution that the Lieutenant-Governor has more sympathy with charity which makes no fuss than with ostentatious charity, which is actuated by self-interest or ambition. We thank Sir Alexander for these wise words, and we hope that they will serve to bring our millionaires to their senses. We hope, too, that the

officials will after this think twice before they induce rich people to adopt ostentatious forms of charity which are expensive, but are not substantially beneficial to the people. This is the first time that we find a Lieutenant-Governor not only entertaining a wise and good principle of charity, but also trying his best to carry that principle into practice. Is it too much to expect that the officials will after this refrain from opening this fund and that fund, and making people contribute to them? His Honour himself will no doubt give up the idea of making pilgrims visiting temples and mosques pay subscriptions to the Dufferin Fund, and let us hope that his example will be followed by the Lieutenant-Governor who will succeed him.

The Lieutenant-Governor, while thanking the zamindars for the efforts they still make to improve water-supply, complains with good reason on his side that they have of late fallen far short of the high ideal of charity in this respect which their ancestors hold up before them. We are sorry that the zamindars do not in these days properly do their duty. It is true that the Government has failed to do its duty in this respect, but that is no reason why we too should neglect the performance of our duty. The Government's indifference in the matter is no justification for our indifference.

(2) The second source that can be drawn upon for the purpose of improving water-supply is loans under the Land Improvement Act. The Lieutenant-Governor says that people have not taken advantage of this source to a desirable extent. This is true. But the reason why the people do not readily apply for these loans is that the system under which these loans are granted is very complicated, and the restrictions which this system imposes on the *rai-yats* are very hard and disagreeable. If these restrictions are slackened, and if the loans are brought more within the reach of the people than they are at present, they are sure to do much in the direction of improving the water-supply of the villages.

(3) The third source is the road cess. The Lieutenant-Governor has tried to prove that the road cess was originally imposed not for the improvement of water-supply, but for the improvement of village communications. The name "road cess" may no doubt be held to justify the Lieutenant-Governor in holding this view. But there is no denying the fact that when there was an objection to the imposition of the cess, the Duke of Argyll assured the people that it would also be used for the purpose of digging tanks and wells. That the road cess is in some cases used for this purpose is what everybody sees, and Sir Alexander Mackenzie himself has not totally ignored this fact. His Honour has in a manner admitted our contention that the road cess should to some extent at least be utilised for improving water-supply, by enjoining the District Boards to spend at least Rs. 5,000 a year on its improvement. We have, therefore, virtually no quarrel with the Lieutenant-Governor, and we do not, like the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, wish to force the Government to admit that the road cess should be chiefly spent on improving the village water-supply. The uselessness of such an attempt becomes patent when we see that the Government has to use a portion—and a large portion—of this cess on the construction of roads. All that Sir Alexander Mackenzie can and should do is not, as Sir Charles Elliott did, to charge the road cess fund with the cost of such public works as the Bihar canal.

We are, however, sorry to see the Lieutenant-Governor trying to prove that the contention of the Commissioner of Orissa, that the road cess should not be spent on education and sanitary improvement, has no force. Mr. Dutt's arguments are unanswerable, and a Governor like Sir Alexander Mackenzie ought not to countenance what is no better than a misappropriation of the road cess fund. That the road cess has been included in the District Fund is no reason why it should be drawn upon for all district purposes.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
June 3rd, 1896.

41. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika* of the 3rd June has the following:—

The proposed water-supply taxation.

To supply the Union Committees with sufficient funds for the improvement of the water-supply in the mufassal, the Lieutenant-Governor proposes to give them the power of imposing one or more of the following taxes of a permissive character in the villages under their jurisdiction:—

(1) Fees on musical processions.

(2) Marriage tax.

(3) Wheel tax.

As regards fees on musical processions, the Lieutenant-Governor observes that such fees have been levied for the last thirty years by the Municipal Commissioners of Patna, and in 1890 were also levied by the Dinapore Nizamut Municipality. So far as the Lieutenant-Governor has been able to ascertain at present, native feeling is decidedly in favour of an impost of this kind, and there is likely to be no opposition at all to the proposed tax, specially as it is going to be imposed for the purpose of improving the water-supply. The tax will be levied by the Union Committees, *i.e.*, by Committees of persons who will be the neighbours of those who will pay it. The tax, there is very little doubt, will be paid willingly and without a murmur.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie is a sympathetic Governor. His motive is unimpeachable and the honesty of his purpose cannot be questioned. We have no heart to object to the scheme of taxation he proposes, but we shall be failing in our duty if we do not say a few words on the proposed measures of taxation.

(1) As regards the Lieutenant-Governor's statement about the fees on musical processions levied in Patna and Dinapore, we cannot persuade ourselves to believe that people there have been from the very first willingly paying these fees. The Lieutenant-Governor's information must have been derived from officials or Municipal Commissioners. It is quite possible that the people have become gradually reconciled to the tax, but that they paid it from the very first without a murmur is something beyond our conception. But even if the people have no objection to an impost of this kind, the Government which has strictly prohibited the levy of *abwabs* by the zamindars ought not to permit the levy of a fee which is as objectionable as an *abwah*. These fees, moreover, like the income tax, come within the category of direct taxation, which is extremely unsuited to the state of things in this country. Musical processions, let it be remembered, have almost become an indispensable accompaniment of religious and social ceremonies and entertainments in this country. Even a man who has to sell his homestead in order to marry his daughter, cannot dispense with them. Under these circumstances, would it not be a cause of complaint to the people to make them pay a fee on musical processions? The imposition of the tax will most likely have the effect of putting a stop to all musical processions, and this will certainly give rise to complaint and dissatisfaction. People have at present to pay *chandās* or subscriptions of many kinds on the occasion of almost all domestic ceremonies. On the occasion of marriage, for instance, there is the *grambhati*, or subscription to the village fund (levied ostensibly with the object of doing some good to the village people). There is, again, the *sayyatolani*, or a gift to the ladies of the bride's house for the ceremony of folding up the bridegroom's *sayya* or bed after the marriage night. There are many other similar fees to be paid, and their payment is necessary to the completion of the ceremony. The proposed fee on musical processions will be an addition to the *chandās* already in existence, which are often felt as a great hardship by many people. To levy a fee on marriage musical processions is, therefore, objectionable on various grounds, and much more objectionable it is to levy a fee on musical processions on the occasion of a religious ceremony. The last will be a direct or indirect interference with the people's religion. Moreover, village people are not so intelligent or advanced as town people, and they are most likely to misconstrue Government's motive in imposing a tax of this nature.

(2) When a separate "marriage tax" is proposed, it is to be understood that this tax is to be levied only on the occasion of marriages in which no fees are or can be levied on musical processions. We can never support a marriage tax. The question of imposing a tax of this kind has been raised from time to time, but whenever the question has been raised, it has been raised by men not acquainted with the manners and customs of the people of this country. There is a great difference between marriage in Europe and marriage in India. In this country, marriage, specially Hindu marriage, is a religious institution. In the case of the Hindu it is an obligation enjoined by the *shastras*. A Hindu becomes *patit*, or degraded in the eye of his society, if he fails to marry his daughter at the proper time. Many Hindu fathers have to contract debts in order to marry their daughters, and it will be an act of cruelty—of wanton cruelty we might say—to levy a marriage tax from them, and make what ought to be a joyous celebration doubly unwelcome to them.

On all these grounds, therefore, we cannot support the proposed imposition of a marriage tax or of a fee on musical processions. It does not matter to the people who levies the tax—the Government or the Union Committees. The people will regard it as a tax levied by the Government. In the eye of the masses of the Indian population, Municipalities, District Boards and even Union Committees are Government institutions. Why, the Government itself has declared the District Boards to be a part and parcel of the administration of the country. To the people at large, therefore, who look upon *chaukidari panchayets* as Government functionaries, Union Committees will certainly appear as a Government institution, and the tax levied by them will, in their eye, have nothing to distinguish it from a tax levied directly by the Government. In this country no tax should be allowed to be levied on the occasion of domestic ceremonies, for every such ceremony is closely associated with religion.

3) We have no such objections, however, to the proposed wheel tax. A tax may also be imposed on riding horses, and even upon beasts of burden at a small rate; *palkis* may also be made to pay a tax, and, if it is necessary, an octroi duty may be imposed upon trades and professions. Such a tax will be paid by all classes of people, and will be equitably distributed among them.

To be plain, it is not in our opinion desirable to impose any new tax for the purpose of improving the water-supply in the villages. The road cess, voluntary subscriptions, private charity, public loans, ought to be turned to their best advantage in order to improve the water-supply. But if they prove inadequate for the purpose, taxes may be levied on the lines indicated by us. No tax should be levied on the occasion of any ceremony which has the least connection or association with religion.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie is a Lieutenant-Governor who is anxious to rule the people in a manner which will give them satisfaction. It is far from his heart to dissatisfy them or wound their feelings in any way. It is this conviction of ours regarding the present ruler of Bengal that leads us to speak out plainly and openly on this subject. We assure him that what we have said above is approved by most of our countrymen. He is a farsighted statesman, and we hope that, during his rule, our cry will not be a cry in the wilderness.

SULABH DAINIK,
June 3rd, 1896.

42. The *Sulabh Dainik* of the 3rd June would not support the proposal for imposing new taxes, if it saw any other means of providing a water-supply for the Province. But it strongly objects to the imposition of taxes upon marriage and musical processions. Marriage is not a luxury among the natives of this country, but a religious obligation which every man, and specially every woman, must fulfil. A tax upon marriage may therefore be construed to be a tax upon religion. Again, if it is supposed that a tax upon marriage will have the effect of curtailing the extravagant marriage expenditure now incurred by Hindus, nothing can be a greater mistake. The tax will only be a new burden upon the bride's father. A tax on musical procession cannot also be countenanced on the ground that, in the *mufassal*, *sankirtan* parties are as a rule accompanied by music, and the tax upon such processions will certainly be a tax upon religion.

The only one of the proposed taxes, therefore, which can be allowed to be imposed is the wheel tax. If carts and carriages did not damage roads, the latter could be kept in good repair with much less expenditure from the road cess fund than is now actually incurred. It is therefore just that a portion of the cost of road-repair should be levied from owners of wheeled conveyances. The saving which will be thus effected in the road cess fund may be expended on water-supply.

(9)—*Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation.*

HITAVADI,
May 29th, 1896.

43. The *Hitavadi* of the 29th May publishes the following letter which it has received from the office of the Agent of the East Indian Railway:—
The drunkenness of a guard on the East Indian Railway.

"In replying refer to No. 4897.

"EAST INDIAN RAILWAY COMPANY, AGENT'S OFFICE, CALCUTTA,

The 23rd May 1896.

"To—The Editor, *Hitavadi*, Calcutta.

"DEAR SIR,

"You allege that the guard of the train which left Howrah at 6-25 P.M. on the 13th April 1896, was 'drunken and disorderly,' and in your article pointed out the danger of placing a train full of passengers in charge of a drunkard; but I am to state that full enquiry has been instituted, with the result that the evidence goes to show that the guard was perfectly sober throughout the trip.

"In these circumstances, the Acting Agent presumes that he need scarcely ask you to take early steps to withdraw the incorrect charge made.

Yours faithfully,

H. Wood,

By order."

While thanking the Agent for his enquiry into the matter, the Editor cannot regard the enquiry as satisfactory. The Agent says nothing as to the following points, namely, whether or not the train stopped from time to time, whether or not it came to a dead stop near the distant signal of the Bhadreswar station, and whether or not the driver alighted from his engine there, and went to the guard's van to know what the matter was. If the guard was not drunk, how was it that the train stopped in this way from time to time and reached Hooghly at least half an hour later than the usual time. If the Agent is willing to make a proper enquiry into the matter, the Editor is prepared to give him the names of some witnesses.

(h)—General.

44. *Al-Punch* of the 23rd April urges the necessity of separating Bihar from the Bengal Administration, as without such an administrative change, the Biharis, backward in education as they are, will never be able to secure a fair share of the posts under Government.

AL PUNCH,
April 23rd, 1896.

45. The *Hitavadi* of the 29th May says that Mr. Slack, Secretary to the Board of Revenue, probably wants to see his office without a native, or why should he be so eager to appoint Europeans in utter disregard of the claims of natives? The other day he advertised three vacancies with the remark that Europeans would be preferred. He has lately advertised some temporary vacancies. Everybody will easily see why Mr. Slack wants to appoint outsiders to these vacancies when there are apprentices in his office who are either graduates or have passed the Clerkship Examination. It need hardly be said that in this case, too, Europeans will have the preference. The writer is grieved by Mr. Slack's conduct, and hopes that Sir Alexander Mackenzie will warn him.

HITAVADI,
May 29th, 1896.

46. Referring to the article on the Manipur exiles, published in the *Pari-darshak-o-Srihattavasi* (see Report on Native Papers for 23rd May 1896, paragraph 78), the *Bangavasi* of the 30th May writes as follows:—

BANGAVASI,
May 30th, 1896.

One hundred and thirty rupees is certainly too small to maintain eighteen persons. Just think of the members of a royal family living on four annas per head per day! Have they to buy clothes and bedsteads and domestic utensils out of this pittance of an allowance? If that be the case, the Government had better hang or imprison them all. This inhumanity in the shape of charity is unbearable.

We do not know whether this allowance is paid from the Manipur treasury or by the Assam Government. We do not believe that the Manipur treasury,

poor as it is, cannot pay a more decent and adequate allowance. If it is the Assam Government that pays the allowance, no one can say that it cannot afford to be a little more generous. It does not certainly become the British Government to treat the innocent wives and children of the condemned Manipur chiefs with such heartlessness and cruelty. It will be to the eternal shame of the British Government if, having the means to do so, it fails to relieve the distress of innocent persons who deserve a more generous and honourable treatment.

It should be ascertained whether the families of the late Raja and Senapati of Manipur are living as State prisoners, and whether it will be objectionable on the part of the Indian public to come to their rescue. There can be no doubt that the Indian public will readily help the Manipur exiles if they are permitted to do so. The children should be properly trained, and the boys should be given a liberal education, so that they may earn an honest livelihood in future. If the Government undertakes to educate them, very well; if not, let it allow the Indian public to do so.

We know very well that the British throne will not be moved or shaken by lamentations and cries of distress, nor is it likely to be washed away by any flood of tears that may be shed in behalf of the royal exiles. But we have no other means of making ourselves heard. Small particles of watery vapour combine and form a cloud, a cloud makes rain, and torrents of rain swell into a deluge. The miserable treatment of the Manipur exiles is like a dagger driven into the heart of the Sylhet people. The story of their misery will spread and wound the heart of the Indian public. Their sympathy will naturally flow towards the families of those whom British justice has condemned and punished. This will not certainly be good for the Government. Let it not be impressed in the mind of the Indian people that the British nation possesses no magnanimity.

SANJIVANI,
May 30th, 1896.

47. The *Sanjivani* of the 30th May does not approve of the appointment of Mr. Buckland to the Commissionership of Chota Nagpur. Magistrates of experience ought to be, and have so long been, appointed Commissioners, and of the present Commissioners, only two came from the Secretariat. Mr. R. C. Dutt is an experienced Magistrate. There are two other Magistrates who are his seniors, but the Government, in recognition of his sterling merits and ability, have been appointing him to officiating Commissionership for the last two years. The Lieutenant-Governor has not done well in not appointing him permanently to a Commissionership. Many suspect that the Government has by appointing Mr. Buckland to the Commissionership of Chota Nagpur deprived a worthy native civilian of the chance of ever being permanently appointed to a Commissionership.

HITAISHI,
June 2nd, 1896.

48. The *Hitaishi* of the 2nd June says that a post of thirty rupees having fallen vacant in the office of the Postmaster-General, that officer directed the filling up of the vacancy by gradual promotion, and the taking of a new man in the lowest grade. In the meantime, however, a retired military man having applied for a post, the post of thirty rupees was given to him. It is a discredit to the administration that a high officer like the Postmaster-General does not care for the bad opinion which such partiality creates in the public mind.

III.—LEGISLATIVE.

SANJIVANI,
May 30th, 1896.

49. The *Sanjivani* of the 30th May approves of the proposed revision of the rules regarding the election of Members to the Legislative Council by the District Boards. The Lieutenant-Governor proposes that a District Board shall have one vote for every fifty thousand rupees of its income. The existing rules, according to which every District Board has one vote, may, as in the case of the last Bhagalpur election, bring about a tie; but the proposed rules are most likely to prevent the occurrence of such an undesirable contingency. In the absence of better rules, those proposed by the Lieutenant-Governor will undoubtedly be welcome to the public.

50. The *Bankura Darpan* of the 1st June says that though the present Lieutenant-Governor is opposed to the infliction of whipping as a punishment upon respectable persons, and has issued a circular to that effect, the *chhota hakims* feel impelled to continue the barbarous practice. Only the other day a sentence of whipping was carried out against the son of a respectable gentleman in Monghyr, who, though he may succeed in proving his innocence in a higher Court, will never get rid of the infamy of having been flogged. The Government felt so concerned about the country and its child-wives that it passed the Consent Act in the face of a most strong opposition. But why does it seem perfectly unconcerned about the infliction of a punishment, the carrying out of which involves an exhibition of shocking indecency and the perpetration of an act of inconceivable cruelty?

BANKURA DARPAN,
June 1st, 1896.

IV.—NATIVE STATES.

51. The *Bharat Mitra* of the 28th May says that the Hindu subjects of the Bhawalpur State have been dissatisfied with their new Vizier, who is a Muhammadan of the orthodox type. The Hindu officers of the State are being indiscriminately dismissed from their offices, and their places are being filled up by Muhammadans. The Vizier is also persuading the Hindu residents to adopt Musalman manners and customs. He did not permit the Hindus to celebrate the last *Holi* festival.

BHARAT MITRA,
May 28th, 1896.

52. In British India, observes the *Sanjivani* of the 30th May, Native Magistrates cannot try Europeans. This is a source not only of great inconvenience, but also of great injustice. It will be a matter of great hardship and inconvenience if Europeans living in Native States are not made amenable to the law of those States. If they desire to enjoy the rights of the native subjects of those States, they must also be prepared to abide by the law in force in those States; otherwise it will not be advisable to allow them to live there.

SANJIVANI,
May 30th, 1896.

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

53. The *Charu Mihir* of the 25th May has the following:—
The British Government as ruler and merchant. Though the English have now exercised sovereign power in India for a century and a half, Napoleon's sneering remark that they are a nation of shopkeepers remains as true as ever. In almost every act done by the English ruler in this country, we find indications of a policy of sucking and draining. The gradual development of the Englishman's mercantile instinct has made us extremely uneasy. The English are selling justice in this country. We do not know if there is any other country where the Government has so completely bought up the health, happiness, body and everything else of its officers with the pittance which the British Government grants its servants in the shape of pay. In the matter of the cotton duties, the Englishman has completely revealed himself in the joint character of a ruler and a merchant. And the officials in different parts of the country are making themselves still more conspicuous in this dual capacity. The English officials in Jhansi, Rawalpindi and Sindh have dealt a blow to the *Swadesi Sabha*. The fact that the Indian movement to boycott Manchester goods has been brought to the notice of Parliament makes it extremely probable that the English merchant will not cease until he has made the best and the fullest use of his opportunities as an English merchant in India. Hostile preparations will probably be made with redoubled vigour to frustrate the objects of the *Swadesi Sabha*. In the Factories Act and in the crocodile tears which are being shed on behalf of the Indian labourer, we notice with alarm this manifestation of the Englishman's mercantile spirit. It is the image of the Englishman as a merchant that remains engraven in cannon balls and bayonets in the royal palace in Burma and in the plains and frontier hills of India. There is room for protest against the sucking and draining policy when it is followed by the Englishman as a ruler, but it is far from easy to oppose that policy when he pursues it in his capacity of a

CHARU MIHIR,
May 25th, 1896.

merchant. It is India's misfortune that both as ruler and merchant the Englishman is showing fuller development every day. There can be no doubt that in time the sovereign and the subject alike will have to suffer the baleful consequences of such a development.

KASIPUR NIVASI,
May 27th, 1896.

54. The *Kasipur Nivasi* of the 27th May regrets that though there are many able and charitable men in the Backergunge district, the claims of none of them were recognised on the occasion of the distribution of the last Birthday honours.

Barisal excluded from the last Birthday honours.

SANJIVANI,
May 30th, 1896.

55. The *Sanjivani* of the 30th May publishes the following from a correspondent:—

The Birthday celebration at Chittagong.

The Empress' Birthday was celebrated with great *eclat* during the four days from 20th to 23rd May. It is necessary that some light should be thrown on the tricks by which the Chittagong officials collected subscriptions from the public and wasted thousands of rupees wrung from poor clerks and *amla* on frivolous amusements. The Commissioner of Chittagong was the life and soul of the movement, and Babu Bagala Prasanna Majumdar, a Deputy Magistrate, took a leading part in it. The following preliminary notice was circulated before anything definite was settled about the celebration:—

Notice.

"Chittagong has many crying wants. It has no town hall or public library, or any other institution of a public nature. A public meeting will be held on Wednesday, the 22nd April, at 5 P.M., in Maulvi Kazim Ali's School premises, to discuss the question of removing these wants. The Commissioner will preside. The public are invited to be present on the occasion and take part in the proceedings.

BAGALA PRASANNA MAZUMDAR.

The 17th April 1896."

In this notice nothing is said about *nautches* and theatricals. At the meeting, however, almost all the speakers waxed eloquent over the merits of these amusements, and town hall and public library were thrown into the back ground. On the 28th April, Bagala Babu held a conference of the gentlemen who took a leading part in the movement, and the following letter was addressed to them:—

"SIR,

"A public meeting was held at Chittagong on the 22nd April last under the presidency of the Commissioner. It was resolved at that meeting to celebrate the Empress' Birthday with alms-giving and amusements, and also to establish a public library and a town hall at Chittagong for the benefit of the public. You will, therefore, be kind enough to be present at a conference to be held on Sunday, the 10th May, at 2 P.M., to consider what steps should be taken to give effect to the resolution passed at the meeting of the 22nd April.

Yours obediently,

CHITTAGONG,
The 28th April 1896."

BAGALA PRASANNA MAZUMDAR,
President.

No mention is made in the letter of any theatrical or *Kalipuja*. Be that as it may, collecting of subscriptions went on briskly. The poor clerks and *amla* who were made to pay subscriptions did not quite understand whether they paid them on account of the Empress' Birthday or for a charitable or public purpose. They placed full trust in the wisdom and integrity of their official superiors. Here is a letter which was addressed to one Lakshmi Kanta Bhattacharyya, Head Pandit of the vernacular school of Dhanghat:—

"The 6th May 1896.

"SIR,

"The Commissioner of Chittagong and other high officials have ordered the raising of subscriptions among the Chittagong public for the purpose of celebrating the Empress' Birthday with the giving of alms to the poor and for other

beneficial public purposes. I have been entrusted with the task of collecting subscriptions from the District Board employés. Please do not forget to send me by money order Re. 1 as your quota of subscription within two or three days from the receipt of this letter.

Yours very obediently,

PRASANNA KUMAR CHAUDHURI,

Head Clerk, District Board, Chittagong."

We understand that copies of the above letter were addressed even to the *ijaradars* and contractors of ferries and pounds under the District Board. The Head Clerk of the District Board is a man of no small importance, and the teachers and pundits of schools and pathsalas under the District Board could not dare to refuse his request, and thereby incur his displeasure. The tone of the letter is peremptory, and no subordinate District Board officer could have the hardihood to disregard it. The letter also discloses two things: (1) It shows that the Commissioner and other high officials ordered the raising of subscriptions. (2) It leads to the natural and inevitable conclusion that the heads of all offices were ordered to collect subscriptions from their subordinates. Could oppression and high-handedness go further? It does not require extraordinary intelligence to understand how the heads of offices, at the order of the Commissioner and other high officials, extorted subscriptions from their poor subordinates.

The subscriptions were raised in the name of charity and public good. Let us see how far the promise was kept. The alms-giving was a miserable affair. Hundreds of beggars from the interior flocked into Chittagong town in the hope of receiving large doles of charity on the occasion of the celebration of their Maharani's birthday. They were, however, sorely disappointed when they each received the miserable dole of a *seer* of rice and one anna in cash. Many hundreds of beggars did not even get this miserable dole, and had to go away totally disappointed.

But arrangements were made on a large scale for amusements. About Rs. 3,000 were set apart for theatricals, and the officials who took a leading part in the movement were too busy in making these arrangements to pay any heed to the cries or complaints of the beggars. The Royal Bengal Theatre was engaged on the occasion, and its Honorary Secretary, Babu Navakumar Raha, addressed the audience before opening the performance, eulogising Mr. Skrine and his able co-adjutors, and comparing Mr. and Mrs. Skrine with Hara and Parvati of the Hindu pantheon. Here is the address delivered by Babu N. K. Raha:—

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

"It does not fall to the lot of every Native Theatre in Calcutta to be honoured with an engagement on the auspicious occasion of Her Imperial Majesty's Birthday—a day especially sacred in the eyes of a nation who are used to look upon their Sovereign as an emblem of Divinity, and of whose sanctity too much cannot be said by them, as loyalty is engrained in their heart of hearts. Envidable as our lot is on the above score, it is doubly envidable that, though strangers in a strange land, we are under the *ægis* of protection of a high official like the Commissioner of a Division, for to whom are we indebted for the honour of appearing to-night before this vast and respectable gathering but one who does not hold it *infra dig* to stand forth as the champion of the poor Bengali actresses, who are generally looked down simply because they are supposed to be recruited from the class of women of questionable character. What catholicity of principle underlies the following memorable words used by Mr. Skrine in his admirable lecture on 'The Theatre, past and present' delivered by him at the Rivers Thompson Memorial Hall, Bhagalpur, on 25th November 1893:—

" 'Now, if the performances of these poor creatures are characterized by strict modesty, as they always are, of what earthly concern is their past to their audience?' Again—

" 'We must learn to distinguish between the woman and the *artiste*, and congratulate ourselves on the existence of a new profession for the fair sex,

elevating its votaries far above the condition from which it has rescued them. I abhor Pharisees and fanatics of all degrees, who aim at making us sober and moral by Acts of Parliament.' * * * 'Those who avert their eyes from an actress striving to earn an honest living, should remember the words of the Founder of the Christian religion:—"Let him who is without sin cast the first stone at her."

" 'It (the cultivation of the drama in Bengal) gives us a platform on which two races may meet in friendly intercourse.'

Have our countrymen a more sincere friend than Mr. Skrine, anxious to bridge over the gulf between the conquerors and the conquered?

"Indeed, we cannot be sufficiently thankful for the very great compliment paid to us in the following words in that ever-to-be-remembered lecture:—

" 'The Royal Bengal Theatre Company, which still flourishes in Beadon Street, was the pioneer, &c., &c., &c. My personal acquaintance with these clever troupes dates back to 1875, since which year I have repeatedly brought them into the mufassal to show our budding Rosciuses what really good acting is. I sincerely hope that the Royal Bengal Theatre may ere long visit Bhagalpur.'

"Gentlemen, you are all aware that there is great difference, in these days of lip philanthropy, between profession and practice; but Mr. Skrine, to his credit be it said, is a glorious exception to the rule, for not content with wishing our company to be at Bhagalpur, he goes the length of actually bringing them there. In fact, although our theatre, pardon the egotism, is the only Native Theatre which can boast of the visit of a Viceroy, or of the honour of being patronised by His Royal Highness the late lamented Prince Albert Victor, who was graciously pleased to confer on it the title of 'Royal,' still the kindness persistently shown to us by Mr. Skrine is without a parallel, and which we must avail ourselves of this opportunity to publicly acknowledge with sentiments of ineffable love and gratitude, for we all love him and look upon him as our 'Guardian Angel.'

"We recollect with no ordinary pride that Mr. Skrine, during the whole of his official career, has been honouring our theatre with his kind patronage. Even as Joint-Magistrate of Chuadanga he thinks of us and receives the company there with no ordinary ovations. Then as Magistrate and Collector he takes us first to Nadia and then to Bhagalpur. Again, as Commissioner, he has brought us here to-night.

"The Royal Bengal Theatre Company has been following Mr. Skrine like his shadow, so as to justify the hope of its performances being at no distant date exhibited at the Belvedere, for if the past be a criterion to judge of the future, we can safely predict that Mr. Skrine is destined to be the occupant of the *guddi* there very soon. Let us all fervently pray for the health and peace of mind of Mr. Skrine and the noble partner of his life. Let us as Hindus bow with reverence to Mr. and Mrs. Skrine, that angel of a lady, as to *Hara* and *Parvati*. In paying to Mr. Skrine our tribute of respect, we must not forget what we owe to his worthy co-adjutor on this occasion, we mean Mr. N. N. Mitter, the worthy leader of the local Bar, to whose untiring exertions on our behalf, we are beholden in no small degree for the honour of being here to-night. We also owe a debt immense of endless gratitude to the President of the Committee, Babu Bogola Prasanna Mozumdar, who has very kindly taken very great interest for us. We indeed count much on the kind patronage of Babu Nityanund Roy who, it is gratifying to note, has not caught the infection of denationalisation notwithstanding his high English education. Our best thanks are due to Babu Amrita Lal Roy Chowdhury of the well-known zamindar family of Barripur and other members of the Committee, for their cordial co-operation with Mr. Skrine in celebrating the hallowed Anniversary of Her Majesty's Birthday with great *eclat*. We are bound to confess that we appreciate the honour of being here to-night the more highly, as through the inscrutable will of Providence, we have, after traversing this immense distance, to exhibit our performances at a stronghold of Hinduism. Mainly based on the *Puranas* as those performances are, I venture to hope that they will exercise a magical influence over the hearts of an orthodox Hindu audience, notwithstanding our numerous sins of omission and commission.

"Without more prefatory remarks, let our performances, which begin to-night, be judged of by themselves. We only beg that you, Gentlemen, will cast off all prejudices, if any of you have against them, and examine, in a calm and dispassionate spirit, the merits and demerits of each performance as it comes before you, as 'all looks yellow to the jaundiced eye.'

CHITTAGONG,
The 20th May 1896.

NOBO COOMAR RAHA,
Honorary Secretary.

"N.B.—Whilst acknowledging with the heartiest thanks the manifold blessings we have reaped at the hands of the gentlemen of the locality, we shall indeed fail in our duty if we do not avail ourselves of this opportunity of apologising for the omission of their names in our category of patrons and well-wishers who, although hitherto unacquainted with us, have evinced the keenest concern and readily shared with Mr. Skrine in his sincere sympathy with our Company.

N. C. RAHA,
Honorary Secretary."

The birthday celebration ended with *Kalipuja*. *Kalipuja* indeed! Under the *sankalpa* (vow) of a Christian Commissioner, in a *malamasa* (inauspicious month) and in the *suklapoksha* (bright fortnight) *Kalipuja* was celebrated with subscriptions paid by Christians, Musalmans, Hindus and Buddhists. This was something new and strange in the annals of India. Such religious toleration was never before heard of. But was it spontaneous, or due to fear of the Commissioner?

56. The *Saraswat Patra* of the 30th May is glad to see Babus Ananda Chandra Sen and Dina Nath Sen honoured by Government. But why has Babu Dina Nath Sen,

SARASWAT PATRA
May 30th, 1896.

who is a native of Bengal and is an Inspector of Schools in the same province, been decorated with the old Hindustani title of "Rai Sahib"? The untitled gentry of Bengal put "Babu" before their names, and those who receive titles have "Bahadur" annexed to theirs. This is the first time that the title of "Sahib" has been added to the name of a Bengali Hindu. It is true an up-country man will sometimes address a Bengali Babu as "Babu Saheb" or "Babu Maharaj," with a view of showing greater respect and humility, but he will also address a pandit of the *tol* as "Panditji" or "Pandit Saheb." Does Government also contemplate titles like "Babu Sahib" and "Pandit Sahib"?

It is not just on the part of the Government to systematically overlook the claims of East Bengal, with its many seats of Sanskrit learning and many renowned pandits, to the title of "Mahamahopadhyaya."

The claim of Raja Rajendra Narayan, of Bhawal, to a higher title is also worthy of Government's consideration. Not only is the Raja a man of wealth and high social position, but there is not a benevolent movement undertaken in East Bengal in which he does not take a prominent part. The *Dacca Prakash* well says that "there is none in this country more public-spirited than the Raja; the Dacca Saraswat Samaj is maintained by his liberality, and his charities are extensive."

57. The *Chinsura Vartavaha* of the 31st May has the following:—

Cause of the deterioration of the Hindu character.

The modern Hindu gives us food for sad reflection. He has lost his character. His self-control is gone, and he has cast off the religious and moral restrictions which had so long kept him in the path of rectitude. In fact, the modern Hindu is a Hindu in name and in name only, and the inner meaning of the proud title he bears is gone. Place the modern Hindu side by side with the ideal Hindu of old, and you will not be able to discover any the slightest resemblance between the two. Go wherever you may in modern India, you will nowhere meet with that purity and religiousness which characterised the Hindu of old. The only reason of this degradation is the growth of intemperance among the Hindus—their indulgence in intoxicating liquors and drugs. In all countries—specially in the country of the Hindus—integrity and purity of manners and customs cannot be properly maintained without the help of a Native Government. Under a foreign Government the utmost that we should and can expect is internal peace and tranquillity in the country if the Government is conducted strictly on the lines of justice

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and equity. Intemperance was not so prevalent among the Hindus during the native rule as it is under a foreign Government. Both history and tradition tell us that Hindu kings never tolerated a traffic in intoxicating drugs and liquors. They never allowed sellers of wine to enter their courts, and never imposed any tax on intoxicating articles. They discouraged drinking and indulgence in intoxicating drugs with all the power they possessed. The religious rules and restrictions had not lost their hold on the people, and the injunctions of the *Sastras* could not be violated with impunity. People had not yet lost their confidence in the Brahmans and the gods, and intemperance could not for a moment be tolerated in Hindu society. During Musalman rule, Hindu manners and customs became perverted to a large extent, but still the Hindu was saved from the attack of intemperance, because that vice is condemned in the Musalman scriptures just as it is in the Hindu *Sastras*. The Musalmans, moreover, were not, like the English, a nation of shopkeepers. They had no commercial instinct. But an Englishman is a shopkeeper, every inch of him, and British rule is conducted on commercial lines. The British Government in India derives a revenue of nine or ten crores of rupees from the sale of intoxicating drugs and liquors, and it cares more for its revenue than for the social purity and moral excellence of the people. It is not, therefore, strange that the Hindu should be so far demoralised—that his manners and customs should become perverted, that his domestic peace and tranquillity should disappear, and that he should become a slave of intemperance. The Government has, of course, always a plausible excuse ready made for this encouragement of intemperance. But the excuse does not satisfy the people, and instead of blessing the Government, they curse it from the depth of their heart and freely give vent to disaffection.

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58. The same paper has the following on Sir Comer Petheram:—

Sir Comer Petheram.

We are really very sorry to learn that Sir Comer Petheram will soon leave India. It is very rare to meet with a man so amiable, courteous and generous as the retiring Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court. The judicial reputation which Sir Comer Petheram earned as the Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court did not suffer in the least after his transfer to the Calcutta High Court, where his impartial administration of justice, his solicitude to acquit the innocent and punish the guilty, and, above all, the fearless spirit with which he maintained the dignity of the Court, won him the admiration of the Indian public. He showed great tact and ability in the trial of the *Bangavasi* case, and his judgment in the Assensole case reassured the native public that even a European could not escape scot-free after committing a most heinous crime. Sir Comer Petheram has always been a sincere well-wisher of the Indian people. It is he who appointed native gentlemen as Sheriffs, and when Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter was a Judge of the Calcutta High Court, he proposed that the former should share with his European colleagues the right of presiding over the Sessions. Sir Comer is the pink of courtesy, and treats suitors, witnesses, pleaders and barristers, in fact, every one who comes across him, with uniform courtesy and consideration. He has never had any occasion to quarrel with the Civilian Judges, and he has always been on very good terms with all his colleagues, Native or European. When Sir Charles Elliott tried to encroach on the rights of the High Court and curtail its powers, he found a formidable opponent in the Chief Justice, who, in a firm and dignified manner, protested against this unlawful interference with the judicial independence of the High Court. Now that such a man is about to go away, we should not be doing our duty properly if we failed to commemorate his name in this country. A public meeting should be called without delay to consider what steps should be taken to do honour to the retiring Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court and suitably commemorate his name.

SULAB DAINIK,
June 1st, 1896.

59. The *Sulabh Dainik* of the 1st June lends its hearty support to the proposal of the *Indian Mirror* and the British Indian Association to give the retiring Chief Justice a suitable farewell. Sir Comer was a friend of the natives and had great affection for them. He did his best to dispense justice without making any distinction of race or creed. The Bengal Government did its best to influence His Lord-

ship in the *Bangavasi* trial, but his sense of justice and his uprightness kept him firm in the path of duty. The punishment of Bartlett in the Assensole case, which had excited the whole Province, earned for him the gratitude of the public. As a private man he was not only of an amiable character, but was never tired of doing good to others. As the head of the judicial administration in Bengal, be it enough to say that he never encouraged injustice.

URIYA PAPERS.

60. The *Uriya and Navasamvad* of the 22nd and 29th April complains of the excessive heat of the season, and points out the want of drinking water in different parts of the Balasore district and the consequent distress of men and cattle in those parts of that district. The writer is glad to learn that the Balasore Municipality has sunk four wells in the Balasore town for the benefit of the municipal population.
61. The *Samvadvahika* of the 24th April notes that such painful want of water was not known to the people for the past six years, and says that unless it rains soon, the lives of the people will be soon in danger.
62. The *Utkaldipika* of the 25th April states that the villages of Dhansar, Korai, Tarakote and Baranedai, in pargana Sargarah in subdivision Jajpur, in district Cuttack, experience considerable hardship for want of drinking-water. The villages situated near the high level canal have been saved this year by the canal not being closed for annual repairs.
63. The *Uriya and Navasamvad* of the 22nd April and the *Samvadvahika* of the 23rd April repeat the story of the whipping of the two Rajkumars, and pronounce the conduct of Mr. Hallward, the Principal of the Ravenshaw Collegiate School, with one voice as cruel and impolite in the extreme. The *Utkaldipika* of the 2nd May adds that Mr. Guise, the District Superintendent of Police, Cuttack, who was in the company of Mr. Hallward, while the minor Rajas of Narsingpur and Pallehara were riding past the play-ground of the Barbati Fort, is in a position to state that the two Rajkumars had actually salaamed the Principal, and that he (Mr. Guise) had seen it.
64. The *Samvadbahika* of the 23rd April states that the Municipality of Balasore, as also the general public of that town, are sorry to lose the services of their Municipal Chairman Dr. Handley, the Civil Surgeon of Balasore, who had endeared himself to the public by his polite manners and by his devotion to public duty.
65. The *Sambalpur Hitaishini* of the 22nd April exhorts its readers and constituents to give up English piece-goods, and encourage the cotton manufactures of India by all means.
66. The *Samvadvahika* of the 30th April is sorry to point out that the portion of the Grand Trunk Road lying between the Balasore and Soro thanas of the Balasore district is so much infested by robbers and dacoits that it is simply impossible for a passenger to travel by that road safely. The writer therefore strongly advocates the re-establishment of the outposts of Bangria, Banaga and Khantapara, which were abolished lately under a rigorous system of retrenchment.
67. The *Utkaldipika* of the 2nd May approves of the appointment of a Muhammadan to the post of a Sub-Deputy Collector in Orissa.

URIYA AND NAVASAM-
VAD,
April 22nd and 29th,
1896.

SAMVADVAHIKA,
April 24th, 1896.

UTKALDIPIKA,
April 25th, 1896.

URIYA AND NAVA-
SAMVAD,
April 22nd, 1896.

SAMVADVAHIKA,
April 23rd, 1896.

SAMBALPUR
HITAISHINI,
April 22nd, 1896.

SAMVADVAHIKA,
April 30th, 1896.

UTKALDIPIKA,
May 2nd, 1896.

CHUNDER NATH BOSE,

Bengali Translator.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,
The 6th June 1896.

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